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# State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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June 10, 1991

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Holland Shepherd, Senior Reclamation Specialist *HS*

RE: Site Inspection, Gardner Canyon Mine, M/023/015, Juab County, Utah

Date of Inspection: May 9, 1991

Time of Inspection: 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Conditions: Sunny, cool

Participants: Bob Steele, Deed Holder; Jack Densie, Operator; Mark Seinsibaugh, USFS; Jane Leeson, Wilderness Society, Utah Chapter; Gary McFarlane, Utah Wilderness Association; Wayne Hedberg and Holland Shepherd, DOGM

This inspection was performed to evaluate the existing and potential disturbance associated with the Gardner Canyon site. Also a primary purpose of the inspection was to ascertain the existing disturbed acreage at the site, for the determination of Large vs Small mine status.

Because of the site's location within the boundary of a designated Wilderness Area, representatives of two wilderness groups accompanied us on this site inspection. As indicated above, individuals representing the operator and one individual representing the USFS (Uintah National Forest) were also in attendance.

## General:

One point of disagreement has been the inclusion of the access road into the disturbed area. The road is 1.1 miles long, from the USFS Wilderness boundary into the site. It is 1.5 miles long from the I-15 frontage road to the mine site. It crosses .4 miles of private land before reaching USFS property. The access road is not a through road and serves no other known purpose than to provide access to the mine site. The operator insists that the road is and always has been a county road, consequently it should not be reclaimed. The USFS does not support this position and believes the road should be reclaimed and included as part of the mine site disturbance.

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While on site, the mine site disturbances were roughly surveyed/measured, using a hip chain. They measured as follows:

Mine Site

Large disturbed area north facing slope (new disturbance)	2.16 acres
Small disturbed area north facing slope (portions 3-4 years old)	.16 acres
Road from USFS Wilderness boundary	2.00 acres
Road from main road to USFS boundary	<u>.73 acres</u>
Total	5.05 acres

The road disturbance was measured using a truck odometer for distance and an average road width of 15 feet.

The most recently disturbed area of the mine resides on the north facing slope on the southwest portion of the site. A large 2.16 acre area has been excavated (open pit mining). According to the USFS, the operator started mining without an approved plan. According to the operator, notices had been filed with the USFS for several years prior to development. Mining apparently started last June, 1990; a cessation order was issued by the USFS at about the same time. According to the USFS, the notices were for assessment work only and not for full scale mining.

The operator has performed assessment work on the patented gypsum claims to maintain the adjacent unpatented limestone claims, also within the Mount Nebo Wilderness. The work was done under the name Golden Gloves Mines, Incorporated. Bob Steele is the Vice President.

The operator plans to initiate mining of a large limestone quarry on the adjacent south facing slope of Gardner Canyon, on the unpatented ground. Preliminary plans for this operation were submitted by Mr. Bob Steele during our inspection. A validity exam is currently being performed by the USFS for these claims. The plan has been placed on temporary hold until this exam has been completed.

The terrain associated with these two proposed mine sites (one gypsum, one limestone) is very steep; the south facing slopes are between 35°-40° about 1:3h:1v. The slopes on the north facing hillsides are slightly less, 28°-30°, (about 1.8h:1v). Reclamation on these slopes will be difficult and will require the incorporation of suitable slope stabilization techniques into the reclamation plan.

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The operator also proposes to develop an area adjacent to Gardner Canyon called Birch Creek, in Birch Canyon. The development would be to access a spring to create a water supply for the mine.

The operator has proposed to bring a crusher onto the site, which may further increase the area of disturbance.

Some existing exploration roads associated with the site, situated above the present disturbance (north facing slopes), may qualify for inclusion within the disturbed area.

#### **Summary and Conclusions:**

Because the disturbance at the site appears to be at, or slightly over 5 acres, and future expansion is inevitable once mining resumes, I recommend that the Division view this as a large mine. Questions remain about including the earlier exploration roads, the access road crossing private ground, expansion into Birch Canyon, development on the north side of Gardner Canyon (south facing slopes, limestone quarry), and post mine use of the mine access road.

Because of the current wilderness status of the area, no post-mine use for the road would be warranted. Post-mine use of the .4 miles of road on private land may be warranted if the land owners agree to leaving the road in. A registered, certified survey of all pertinent disturbance may be in order to resolve the total disturbance question.

The Division needs to make sure that the above questions are addressed before any approval is made regarding a small mine or large mine plan. Also, the land ownership and access disputes should be cleared up before the Division makes any approvals for this property.

jb  
cc: Jane Leeson, The Wilderness Society  
Mark Seinsibaugh, USFS  
Bob Steele, Operator/owner  
Lowell Braxton, DOGM

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